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Northwest Metalworkers – Worldwide Impact

Forest fires garner widespread media coverage. But few of us think about the specialized equipment and components that play an important part in saving lives and property and ultimately defeating these destructive fires.

In Bend, Oregon Kawak Aviation Technologies manufactures one of many vital components in the combat of voracious fires – the Hover Refill Pump, or a snorkel pump. The snorkel pump is connected to a hose then the hose is attached to a specialized tank fitted into the belly of a helicopter. A four or a six inch hose will be used depending tank sizes which can range from 360 to 1000 gallons. The tanks are

adapted to several models of helicopters. When in use, the helicopter will hover and lower the Kawak Hover Pump into a lake or river and pump water vertically into the helicopter's belly tank at rates from 900 to 2000 GPM depending upon the configuration of the pump and hose size. Just think about it in 30 seconds or less the helicopter can have a belly full of water and be headed back into the fray. What an incredible piece of equipment!

Two Northwest Metalworking suppliers are involved in the suc-

cess of the Kawak Hover Refill Pump. Advanced Machining Services (AMS) supplies machining and machined components to Kawak. Northwest Brass and Aluminum foundry supplies raw castings to AMS. Three years ago, AMS owner Craig Achatz came to SMH Inc. for assistance. Kawak had been having delivery and quality issues with one of the critical components of the pump, the bearing housing casting. The casting not only supports the lower bearing of the impeller shaft, it is also the stator portion of the pump just below the impeller. NWB, another SMH principal, took on the bearing housing, shipped the castings to AMS and four weeks later the quality and supply issues were eliminated. Kawak now has over 100 Hover Refill Pumps in service with firefighting contractors all over the United States, Canada, and Australia. The Kawak Hover Refill Pump with a brushless motor design exceeds the US Forest Services snorkel pump requirements and has to its credit an impeccable reliability record.

In our modern, competitive manufacturing environment, the most important asset to any manufacturer is having a reliable supply chain.

For more information about Advanced Machining Services, Northwest Brass and Aluminum Foundry, or ways we can help with your manufacturing needs, **contact SMH Inc. at: 360.341.2226 (office) or 425.501.7342 (cell) stephen@smhincllc.com www.smhincllc.com**

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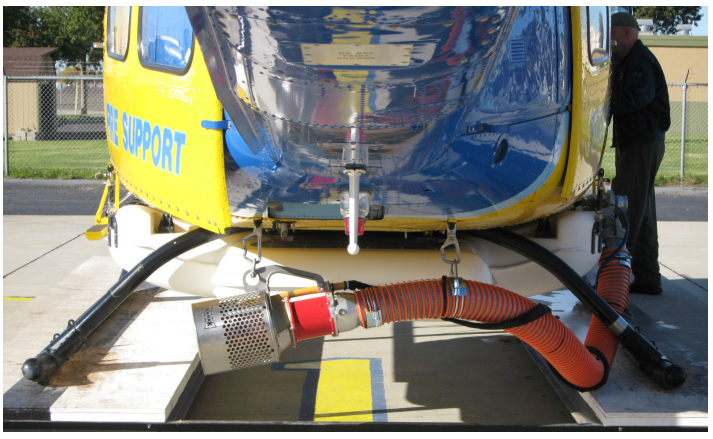
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